Release of fishing boats of Gujarat fishermen

2137. SHRI JAYANTILAL BAROT:
SHRI SURENDRA MOTILAL PATEL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any possibility has been explored to release around 432 fishermen of Gujarat, captured by the Pakistan Marine Security Agency (PMSA);

(b) whether Pakistan has no intention of returning 268 fishing boats which is main source of their livelihood; and

(c) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons for not returning the fishing boats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) According to information available, there are 412 Indian fishermen in the custody of Pakistan, out of which 284 are from Gujarat. Government has already confirmed the nationality of 220 fishermen. The nationality of 192 fishermen who were given consular access on July 25-26, 2006 is being processed. The two countries reached an understanding at the Home Secretary level talks on May 30-31, 2006 in Islamabad under which both sides agreed to expedite release of fishermen and civilian prisoners and complete necessary formalities like grant of consular access and confirmation of national status in the earliest possible time.

(b) and (c) A total number of 287 fishing boats are in Pakistan's custody and Government has been consistently taking up the issue of the release with Pakistan at various levels. However, Pakistan has not agreed to release the fishing boats.

Barrage at Sutlej river

† 2138. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
MS.SUSHILA TIRIYA:
SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI:
SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that barrage being

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.